

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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R 090644Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1486
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BERLIN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION BERLIN UNN
AMCONSUL MUNICH
AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

E.O. 11652: N/A
CSTAGS: CGEN, CSCE, RO
SUBJECT: ROMANIAN DECREE ON LODGING AND EXCHANGE
REQUIREMENTS FOR TOURISTS

REF: A. BUCHAREST 531 (NOTAL); B. BUCHAREST 727 (NOTAL)

1. SUMMARY. IN FOLLOW-UP TO (AND CONTRADICTION OF)
PREVIOUS CONVERSATION (REF A), DEPUTY FOREIGN MINISTER
PACOSTE TOLD FRG AMBASSAFMR BALKEN FOLLOWING DAY THAT SITU-
ATION RE "ROMANIAN ORIGIN" VISITORS TO ROMANIA WOULD
BE CLEARED UP WITHIN THE NEXT THREE WEEKS (I.E. BY
ABOUT NOW). SINCE THIS LAST CONVERSATION, INDICATIONS
ARE THAT ROMANIAN EMBASSIES ABROAD HAVE BEEN IN-
STRUCTURED TO ISSUE DOCUMENTS EXEMPTING FORMER CITIZENS
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FROM THE \$10 A DAY CHARGE AND RESTRICTION ON STAY-
ING WITH RELATIVES.

2. FRG AMBASSADOR BALKEN GAVE AMBASSADOR FEBRUARY 4
SUMMARY OF LATEST DEVELOPMENTS ON QUESTION OF WHO IS
AND WHO IS NOT CONSIDERED TO BE OF "ROMANIAN
ORIGIN" FOR PURPOSES OF BEING EXEMPTED FROM

LODGING AND EXCHANGE REQUIREMENTS FOR TOURISTS.

3. AMBASSADOR BALKEN REFERRED FIRST TO HIS HEATED TALK WITH PACOSTE ON JANUARY 21 (REFTEL A) WHEN PACOSTE HAD ROUNDLY CRITICIZED GERMAN CONSUL'S ATTEMPTS TO ASSIST ROMANIAN CITIZENS WHO ARE ETHNICALLY GERMAN. PACOSTE HAD INSISTED FLATLY THAT DECREE 372 COVERED ONLY THOSE ROMANIAN CITIZENS WHO STILL POSSESSED ROMANIAN PASSPORTS AND WERE LIVING ABROAD REGARDLESS OF WHAT THE LANGUAGE OF THE DECREE SAID ABOUT PERSONS NO LONGER HAVING ROMANIAN CITIZENSHIP BUT OF "ROMANIAN ORIGIN." ACCORDING TO AMBASSADOR BALKEN, THIS SHARP DISCUSSION WAS FOLLOWED THE NEXT DAY (ON THE ANNUAL DIPLOMATIC HUNT) BY A COMPLETELY IDYLIC ONE, WHERE PACOSTE IN EFFECT SAID DON'T WORRY, EVERYTHING WILL BE CLEARED UP IN THE NEXT THREE WEEKS. BALKEN ON BOTH OCCASIONS STRESSED TO PACOSTE THAT A LITERAL INTERPRETATION OF THE PHRASE "ROMANIAN ORIGIN" AS INCLUDING THE "SAXONS" AND "SCHWABIANS" WHO HAD BEEN ROMANIAN CITIZENS BUT HAD EMIGRATED TO THE FRG WOULD TAKE "A LOT OF THE STEAM" OUT OF THE PRESSURES ON FAMILY CONTACTS. THESE PRESSURES WERE INCREASING SUBSTANTIALLY BECAUSE GERMANS COMING HERE OVER THE HOLIDAYS TO SEE THEIR RELATIVES AND THINKING THE FORMER OBLIGATORY CURRENCY EXCHANGE HAD BEEN ABOLISHED FOR THEM HAD RETURNED IRATE TO GERMANY BECAUSE THEY HAD HAD TO CHANGE MONEY AFTER ALL. ONE CONSEQUENCE HAD BEEN THAT THE ASSOCIATION LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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(LANDSMANSCHAFT) FOR THESE GROUPS OF EX-ROMANIAN GERMANS HAD ADVISED ITS MEMBERS AGAINST GOING TO ROMANIA AT ALL.

4. SINCE HIS TALK WITH PACOSTE, AMBASSADOR BALKEN SAID THERE HAVE BEEN SEVERAL INTERESTING DEVELOPMENTS. ROMANIAN AMBASSADOR MOREGA FOR THE LAST WEEK OR SO HAS BEEN TELLING THE LANDSMANSCHAFT AND OTHER GROUPS THAT ANYONE SHOULD FEEL FREE TO SEEK THE NECESSARY EXEMPTION DOCUMENTATION FROM THE ROMANIAN EMBASSY WHICH WILL BE PROVIDED PROMPTLY AND EASILY. THEN SEVERAL DDAYS AGO MOREGA SAW VON WEIL OF THE FOREIGN OFFICE TO STATE THE SAME THING OFFICIALLY. IN RESPONSE TO VON WEIL'S REPEATED QUESTIONING AS TO WHETHER THE EXEMPTION WOULD APPLY TO FORMER ROMANIAN CITIZENS WHO WERE NOT ETHNICALLY ROMANIAN, MOREGA REPEATEDLY SAID YES. HE SAID VERY SPECIFICALLY THAT THE SIEBENBURGER ("SAXONS") AND THE SCHWABIANS WOULD BE CONSIDERED

TO HAVE "ORIGINATED IN ROMANIA." AMBASSADOR BALKEN HIMSELF BELIEVES ALL THAT CAN BE DONE NOW IS TO WAIT AND SEE HOW THE NEW SYSTEM WORKS. HE ADDED THAT IT IS CLEAR FROM MOREGA'S PRESENTATION THAT ROMANIAN EMBASSIES EVERYWHERE ARE BEING INSTRUCTED ALONG THE SAME LINES. INTERESTINGLY ENOUGH, HE NOTED THAT THE GERMANS WHO CAME OVER THE HOLIDAYS HAD NO PROBLEM STAYING WITH RELATIVES (WHICH IS THE OTHER HALNBOF THE PROVISION OF DECREE 372)

5. IN A RELATED DEVELOPMENT, THE FRG EMBASSY HAS RECEIVED APPROVALS FOR FAMILY REUNIFICATION FOR ABOUT 550-600 PERSONS WITH MORE PROMISED. AMBASSADOR BALKEN FEELS THAT IF THIS TENDENCY CONTINUES EMIGRATION TO THE FRG COULD BEGIN TO APPROACH THE PRE-HELSINKI LEVEL OF 7-800 ANNUALLY.

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6. COMMENT: AMBASSADOR BALKEN IS AS PUZZLED AS WE ARE OVER THE REASONS BEHIND THIS WHOLE UPROAR. DECREE 372 SEEMED TAILOR-MADE TO EASE SOME OF THE TENSIONS BETWEEN ROMANIA AND THE FRG OVER THE GERMAN MINORITY HERE. DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER OPREA HOWEVER DID NOT MENTION THE DECREE WHEN HE WAS IN GERMANY IN THE LATE FALL AND PACOSTE'S ALMOST VIOLENT REJECTION OF ITS HAVING ANY APPLICABILITY LEADS BALKEN TO SPECULATE THAT (A) EITHER THE GOR SOMEHOW DID NOT THINK THROUGH ALL THE IMPLICATIONS (ESPECIALLY FINANCIAL OR (B) REALLY MEANT WHAT IT SAID BUT SOMEHOW THE GOR WAS FORCED TO COME UP WITH A DIFFERENT INTERPRETATION. ON THE LATTER SCORE, HE WONDERS WHETHER SOME OF ROMANIA'S ALLIES, ESPECIALLY THE GDR, WERE SERIOUSLY BOTHERED BY THE POTENTIAL SPILLOVER EFFECT OF PERSONS NOW LIVING IN THE FRG HAVING FREER ACCESS TO THEIR EX-HOMELAND AND THEIR RELATIVES. OUR OWN FEELING IS THAT THE FIRST EXPLANATION MAY BE ALSO QUITE POSSIBLE GIVEN OTHER INSTANCES WE HAVE SEEN OF ROMANIAN ABILITY TO BOTCH A PUBLIC RELATIONS ADVANTAGE.
BARNES

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